

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office action dated 12/24/2002 is respectfully requested under the provisions of 37 CFR §1.111(b).

Applicant hereby petitions for a one-month extension and authorizes payment from deposit account 502528. A separate fee authorization and copy thereof is provided herewith.

Applicant has filed herewith a power of attorney adding Mr. Daniel B. Curtis and Nola Mae McBain.

Applicant has listed all the pending claims with each line of the claim separately numbered per the Examiner's request (using the revised format).

Claims 1-8 are pending.

Claims 1-8 stand rejected.

No claims were amended.

I. Rejections under 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Snow (6,055,540) in view of MacPhail (5,107,419). This rejection is respectfully traversed as a prima facie case of obviousness has not been presented.

A. The Invention

The invention addresses the problem of relating different types of documents to each other (pg. 1, ll. 18-22). A document is loaded into the system (either by scanning it or by receiving an electronic document – pg. 2, ll. 3-4; pg. 4, ll 3-8, ll 19-22). The document is categorized. This categorization can include examining the content of the document, physical dimensions of the document, and matching the document or portions of the document to a template or image (pg. 5, l. 10 – pg. 6, l. 4). Once the document is categorized, a rule is received that is associated with the category and the document is subsequently processed according to the rule (pg. 6, ll. 6-7; pg. 6, l. 15 – pg. 7, l. 12). The rule can cause information to be extracted from

the document, can cause the document to be linked to other related documents, and/or cause documents to be backed up or disposed etc. (pg. 7, l. 13 – pg. 8, l. 22).

The problem was solved, in accordance with one aspect of the invention by causing a computer to perform steps of:

loading a document into storage, said document having a category;

determining the document category;

receiving at least one processing rule, wherein the rule is associated with the document category; and

processing the document according to the processing rule.

The invention allows the computer user to load a document, determine the document category and apply a rule based on the document category to the document.

B. Prior Art

Snow (6,055,540). The Snow reference discloses a “Method and apparatus for creating a category hierarchy for classification of documents” that teaches ways to create a class hierarchy for classification of documents (S: C. 1, ll. 34-40). Snow also teaches means for manipulating the class hierarchy using category commands (S: fig. 3, C. 4, ll. 1-7). Snow also teaches a method for classifying a document within the class hierarchy (S: C. 6, l. 56 – C. 7, l. 9).

However, Snow does not teach receiving a processing rule associated with the document category or processing the document according to the rule.

The Office Action cites S: col. 1 lines 45-46, col. 3, lines 45-67 and col. 4 lines 1-7 as teaching the step of receiving a processing rule. However, Snow col. 1 lines 45-46 is “The class hierarchy is displayed to assist a user in entering a command for manipulating the class hierarchy.” This simply teaches display and manipulation of the class hierarchy and teaches nothing about the step of receiving a processing rule associated with the document category.

Furthermore, Snow col. 3, line 45 through col. 4, line 7 simply teaches the program loop used to create the class hierarchy, the class hierarchy display process, and mentions that several

category commands are available to create the class hierarchy. Again, this reference teaches nothing about the step of receiving a processing rule associated with the document category.

Applicant has been unable to find any other teaching in Snow that would suggest or correspond to teaching the step of receiving a processing rule associated with the document category.

Thus, Snow does not teach or suggest the step of receiving a processing rule associated with the document category.

With regard to the step of processing the document according to the processing rule: The Office Action cites Snow col. 1, ll. 46-58 as teaching this step. However, the cited text simply states that a user can select a category command to manipulate the class hierarchy. This citation does not teach or suggest the step of processing a document in accordance with a processing rule.

MacPhail. The MacPhail reference teaches a method of explicitly tagging documents with a label and expiration date. This explicit information is used to identify the purpose and ownership of the document as well as providing information for document retention policies.

Like Snow, MacPhail does not teach or suggest the step of receiving or the step of processing used by the instant invention.

C. Analysis

An obviousness rejection requires that one or more references available to the inventor teach a suggestion to combine or modify the reference, the combination or modification of which would appear to be sufficient to have made the claimed invention obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

The Office Action has not made a prima facie case for obviousness as nothing in Snow or MacPhail teach or suggest the steps of receiving or processing. Thus, claim 1 is patentable and applicant respectfully traverses the 103(a) rejection.

Claims 3, 5, and 7 claim a computer system performing the method of claim 1, a computer program product for causing a computer to perform the method of claim 1, and a method for transferring a computer program product for causing a computer to perform the

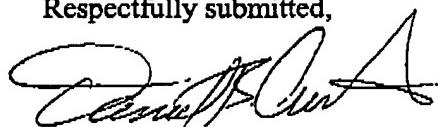
method of claim 1, respectively. Thus claims 3, 5 and 7 are also patentable under the analysis provided for claim 1 and applicant respectfully traverses the 103(a) rejection for these claims.

Claims 2, 4, 6, and 8 depend on and further limit their respective independent claims and thus are also patentable. Thus, applicant respectfully traverses the 103(a) rejection for these claims.

Since all rejections, objections and requirements contained in the outstanding official action have been fully answered or traversed and shown to be inapplicable to the present claims, it is respectfully submitted that reconsideration is now in order under the provisions of 37 CFR §1.111(b) and such reconsideration is respectfully requested. Upon reconsideration, it is also respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and such action is therefore respectfully requested.

Should any additional issues remain, or if I can be of any additional assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (650) 812 4259.

Respectfully submitted,



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